

## MANAGEMENT FOR TOMORROW

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**I**N outline, the thesis of this article is :

In good measure, today makes tomorrow. Our actions constitute the substance of today to build the morrow. An administrator's life is one of action. A significant part of any action is its objectives and implications. If the administrator does not manage by objectives and implications and that, consciously and systematically, he is jeopardising tomorrow. Management for tomorrow should therefore be management by objectives *and* management by implications.

### *Management by Objectives*

The term 'management by objectives' is familiar to students of business administration. The substance of this term is familiar to every successful administrator; for, in effect, that is what he is doing.

It stands to reason that a clear conception of the objectives and a constant awareness thereof makes for significant success. 'Management by objectives' is therefore not merely necessary but vital for the success of *every* enterprise.

Only if we manage by objectives alone and tend to ignore the implications the objectives may get imperilled.

As it is, even 'management by objectives' is not that common. Much more common is 'management by whims'. Either there is a blurred view of the objectives or the awareness thereof is missing, with the result, there is activity, but no achievement; movement, but no progress.

At least one management thinker<sup>1</sup> has delightfully discussed this concept of 'management by objectives' and this article will confine itself to the allied concept of 'management by implications'.

### *Management by Implications*

What we do, and more so, how we do it, can cause certain reactions in people. These reactions in turn cause certain consequences. And these consequences may well defeat the objectives.

1. Peter Drucker. *The Practice of Management*, London, William Heinemann, 1955.

When a manager<sup>2</sup> does a thing, he tends to think that he is a lone individual and his is an odd act.

In fact, the manager is not a mere individual, much as he may desire to be. Whether he knows it or not, he is a representative of several sections of the population and he stands for certain values.

His act itself is not a lone act. It is a significant one. In the eyes of the onlooker, the act is representative of the man. What may be theoretically described as lone, turns out to be significant as far as the moulding of attitude goes.

The onlooking individual is not an isolated dot in a vacuum either; he is a point in many a circle. And he is representative too.

It is in this context that the reaction of one individual to the action of an administrator has to be viewed. Since the individual develops his attitudes on the basis of one-time acts, since such attitudes are turned on all that the manager stands for in his eyes, and since other dots in his circles are mentally prepared to accept this odd individual's reactions as their own, the implications of the decisions and the actions of an administrator go far beyond the visible concept; they are much deeper, wider and significant than the normal and visual comprehension suggests.

A blunder by a manager affects all the dots in his circles for a long, long time. "All P.W.D. officials are corrupt", for example, may be semantic nonsense but it is good attitude sense.

When a manager gets involved, therefore, all that he stands for gets involved. And he tends to get involved every time he decides or acts.

That he is not aware of what he stands for, does not save him from the consequences. The ignorance of, or indifference to invisible but powerful forces will not save an enterprise from the inevitable repercussions.

It is not as if management by implications is for a distant day. It pays in the short run too. Every decision, action, and behaviour affects the work force and therefore its attitudes to the administrator.

The day-to-day achievements of the objectives are hindered or made halting if those attitudes are not happy.

Management by implications does not concern itself with ends and means or morality or politics. It concerns itself with the reactions of people and the actions they could lead to.

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2. The words 'manager' and 'administrator' have been interchangeably used. The word 'management' itself has been used in its broadest sense.

### *The Nature of Reaction*

Action and reaction, it is said, are equal and opposite. This is in the physical sphere. In the human sphere, the reaction can be more but not equal. How much more depends upon the individual and the opportunities he gets. The power for evil or good—effectively, the power for evil—of even a single individual can be considerable. What of the many! If we continue to antagonise the many, we are certainly not managing for the morrow.

Again, if we cannot visualise its force or impact, we cannot visualise the nature of the reaction either. It may take weird forms, forms never dreamt of. For, implications often concern men and that is dynamite.

Neutralisation of undesirable effects set up as a result of a chain of reactions, to a thoughtless decision, act, or behaviour on the part of an administrator is almost impossible. Relational cancer is more easily started than stopped. Avoiding an action, on occasions, may be better than undoing whatever has been occasioned by a prior action.

When we further recall that a reaction affects not merely that single action but the future actions as well, preventive management makes sense in the sphere of managing the human material.

### *The Seeds of Tomorrow*

While they are working for the objectives, administrators tend to think they themselves cannot be responsible for the defeat of or damage to those objectives. While anxious to preserve the things they stand for, they do not seem to be quite aware of what does help that accomplishment in the long run.

The obstacles to the achievement of objectives come from two sources. One is the deliberate attempt on the part of an external force and this can be and is met fairly effectively. The other would be the unconscious doings of the administrative population. More often, difficulties in the way of accomplishment of objectives are created by the unconscious, uncalculated and yet thoughtless decisions and actions of the administrators.

The reader can readily recall a hundred instances where someone did not manage by implications and so many are paying for it for so long.

Let us take a simple act—or what an exporting administrator thinks a simple act. He exports a product that is not true to the sample. His objective, namely, 'good money', is achieved. But with what dire implications to the trade and commerce of the country?

By one act on the part of an administrator who would not care to manage by implications, the whole nation is condemned. It will be many years of many sacrifices before the lost reputation is regained.

Let us take another. A business manager misuses one import licence. He thinks he is clever. Possibly he thinks he is managing by objectives. But what has he done? What are the implications? Every business manager becomes suspect. Import licence applications get unduly delayed. A good lot of unpleasantness is caused. And those in business tend to blame the Government officials. If they think for one moment, they will find that for the fault of one man, for the default of one man, the entire community suffers.

Let us take a third. An administrator promotes a wrong man out of turn. He does it thinking he is thereby not doing anything seriously wrong. Or, maybe, he does it to prove he is in power. But, what are the implications? Promoting in a wrong way one man becomes equivalent to demoting hundred right men. Not merely the men that are directly affected but the entire work force loses morale. Building back is an uphill task.

Whether at the international level or the national or the unit, being ignorant of or being indifferent to the implications of one's action means grave consequence to oneself and what one happens to stand for—'happens to' because *one may not stand for anything but the situation may make him to.*

Trust, confidence and dependability are to be jealously guarded. And they can be guarded only when we manage by implications.

#### *Laws of Future*

"Forgive them; they know not". No, the future will not forgive them. The laws of nature are inexorable and relentless and so are the laws of the future. Intentions of the person do not affect them and regrets do not retract them.

Every effect has a cause and is a cause of the future effect. Human society being a continuous process, the vices and virtues of one generation will shape the future generations. In good part, past has moulded the present and we are paying for the sins of omission and commission on the part of our forefathers.

Past is not past. It is very much the future. The future is uncertain only to the extent we are unmindful of the present. It is in our hands to save the yet unborn children a sad fate.

What the present generation does has two aspects : it affects the present and it creates the conditions which shape the future. Whether

we do it consciously or not, we conceive tomorrows today. Hence our responsibility to the future makes it imperative for us to consider the implications along with the immediate results of our innumerable decisions, deeds and behaviour.

#### *Some Guidelines*

The phenomenon of management by implications has been there all the time. We give it a name to give it a focus.

In its very nature, management by implications cannot be a dogma or a fixed tenet or a set of rules. It calls for thought, a sense of values, a sense of responsibility, imagination and dynamic vision—all of which stems from personal discipline. Even so, certain characteristics mark it unmistakably.

Management by implications is management for tomorrow. It demands conscious and systematic effort on the part of the administrator.

Following certain steps, it has been observed, makes management by implications effective.

The first step is to be constantly aware of the fact that in the eyes of the public, we, each one of us, stand for many things—sections of population, a set of values, a system or an institution. In other words, in the eyes of the observer, we are accredited representatives. On the basis of what we do and how we do it, the outsider will form his impression and shape his attitude not merely of and to ourselves but our many constituencies.

The second step is to be alert to this critical assessment. On the basis of such attitudes, others will act towards us and respond to what we stand for. If we hold dear what we stand for, we have to make deliberate efforts to nurture our stand.

Knowing that doing is the substance of the administrative process, we should feel and act responsibly. We should be prepared to look beyond the immediate present, certainly beyond our own personal ends.

The third step is to hold ourselves responsible for consciously and systematically playing our part in shaping the future. This means 'educating' the people that matter on the implications of their possible actions.

Today we take a decision with a conscious eye on the objective and we know the implications in a general way, almost instinctively. For the sake of tomorrow, we should have an equally *conscious* eye on the implications.

This means some self-managing. This means that every time we decide, we pause and think. We ask ourselves questions like :

Who are the people involved? And how are they affected?  
An individual? A group? Several groups? How affected?

What are involved? How are they affected? Objective?  
Principles? Movements? And how?

and probe for satisfactory answers. The implications should be visualised *before* we act. Otherwise, we will be faced with consequences and we are not in executive seats to bring about consequences but desired and desirable results.

Those who are in leadership position should be constantly aware that some one is constantly watching, another some one is constantly listening. Whatever they do is not merely news but it is the fabric of tomorrow. The more important they are—by chance or design—the more significant their hourly life. This again calls for self-managing.

#### *Attitudes*

Attitudes in a major way determine one's action. And what makes for one's attitudes to a person or a thing?

Many forces and factors make for one's attitude. In part, what one has heard and read about. In larger measure, what one has come to know of it personally during one's day-to-day dealings. In other words, what happens to one.

Sad reactions emerge when one is hit or hurt. And what hurts is, often enough, not what you do but how you do it, not what you say but how you say it.

Management by implications, therefore, lays emphasis on *how* you do it. And this calls for self-managing too.

#### *"No"-How*

Even in an economy of plenty, no one in an administrative position can say 'yes' to every request for long. More so in an economy of scarcity.

But there is a 'no'—how. There is a pleasant way of saying even unpleasant things. There is an agreeable way of doing disagreeable things. It calls for a little extra thought and effort but it is worth it. In fact, this is a must according to this concept.

It is much easier to be curt, crude and unimaginative. But what are the implications? It enlarges the pool of bitterness to new levels.

It sets in relational cancer or ulcer. The pent-up disapproval of the way administrators go about is a veritable volcano. Strikes, it is said, are a symptom of a chronic disease.

This volcano is made ineffective where you manage by implications. This, however, calls for vigilance. 'Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty' may well be interpreted this way.

Vigilance is also called for in matters of wealth and power. *Show* of wealth and *show* of power are things people do not take kindly to.

Vigilance is again required to keep under check those who would not manage by implications, who, in essence, would say: After me, the deluge! They are the parents of enemies to what we stand for and we have to weed them out.

The demands of the future require the raising of the quality of people. The honest citizenry should be bolstered up. The law of the land and the administration thereof should be such that the good and the honest men thrive—at least they are not put to harassments.

Facts *are* stronger than fiction. If this is not realised, even straightforward people may be forced to go in for logical fiction and this does not augur well for the future. To distinguish the sincere from the dishonest is not easy. It involves risk. It calls for judgment. But what are the implications of taking the easy way, the routine approach to all men?

#### *Time is the Essence*

Time is the essence, says management by implications. Either we make time our friend or it turns out to be our enemy. Delay—and most delay is avoidable—is truly treacherous. Only when we manage by implications we visualise the disservice we do for the national interests by tolerating delays.

While avoidable delay is treacherous, management by implications does not recommend haste. It commends cool thinking and thinking means time. We have to find time to think—we cannot be too busy to be effective. It may be that think-help is required and we would do well to take it.

Decision-making is largely a matter of judgment but it is not casual. A statement of implications can certainly accompany a case, as does a statement of facts.

Consciousness of the implications of not managing by implications and self-discipline to manage by implications form then the core of this concept.

### *Industrial System in a Democracy*

In a democracy the power of the vote is the greatest power. More and more people will and do vote for something they consider desirable and important for the society at large. This vote is in a fair measure dependent upon the reactions of the people to systems, standards and values. This in turn depends upon their reactions to administrative behaviour.

In today's situation, what the business administrator does and how he does become no less important than "what for" he does. What for he does, the objectives or purpose of the enterprise constitute an invisible factor and can be felt only by what he does and how he does it. It may be true that the profits a business manager gets is the remuneration for his service, for the creation of utilities. The implications of his actions and behaviour might create the impression that he is all for ceilingless profits and that at the expense of the customer. Once the customer is led to believe that the business manager is living at his expense, whatever his professed objectives, he and his kind become a victim of anti-vote.

Service is a fit case for respect, for a favourable vote. The business manager renders as much service to the society as a doctor or a lawyer. He creates work and he creates wealth. How is it he does not attract the vote? This question has to be answered by every manager.

### *Applicability to Business Administration*

Industry has much to gain by and therefore a great urgency for management by implications.

In a democracy, the survival of an industrial unit depends upon the survival of the industrial system. The attitudes of the people which in effect will determine the survival of the system are shaped by the way the administrator of the individual unit goes about.

The administrator is working under pressure; he is fighting against time; he is impatient to get certain results. In his anxiety, he tends to forget the future. What he does apparently and currently supports the objectives but it contains within it the germs which over a time would muster and defeat the very objectives. However good the objectives, however sincere the efforts to achieve them, and however legitimate the means, if he does not take conscious care to avoid such aspects of action which will defeat what he stands for, nemesis will overtake.



The success of management by objectives to a large extent depends upon management by implications for the effects of the latter are direct and decisive on the former.

Knowing as he does that his life is one series of decisions and actions, that it is geared to attain certain objectives, that the defeating forces though they may not affect the attainment of the objectives just today may gather strength imperceptibly and threaten the survival, the shrewd administrator plans and performs in such a way that his actions towards the objectives do not create conditions in which the future of the system may be in danger.

The individual objectives of an enterprise should tie in with the larger objective of the nation. They should, in fact, be of a nature of *sub-objectives*. If this is so, every enterprise will attempt to raise the standard of living by (a) creating better goods and services at lesser cost, (b) creating more productive jobs and enlarging the purchasing power, and (c) raising the total wealth of the country by daring risks. Every business manager will conduct himself in such a way that his bona fides are not questioned. Every business manager will be in neighbour's keep. He will do things in a way which will win the respect and sympathy and, therefore, the vote of the people. He has to necessarily make amends for the past but he will tell himself : "Let me do what is well in my hands, what is still in hands."

#### *Applicability to Public Administration*

Because of the author's familiarity with industry, the concept has been discussed in terms of the business system. This applies as much to the governmental system.

Just as business managers can choose to shape the future for themselves and what they stand for, so the public servants can shape the future of the governmental system. And in fact, they are shaping and they have been all the time shaping, maybe, not consciously.

In the current context, management by implications is much more applicable to public administration. The pace of progress and the quality of progress lie very much in the hands of the public servants.

It is not merely the fate of a few individuals but also the fate of many a nation-building movement that lies in their hands. What they do and how they do may spark the enthusiasms of people or plain kill it.

Their day-to-day official behaviour can undermine the present government and the governmental system.

Guidelines suggested to business administration are equally applicable to public administration—a representative sense, a sense of time and therefore a sense of delay-guilt and a sense of thoughtful man-to-man behaviour.

*General Applicability*

Management by implications is a matter of quality. It calls for much more than cleverness. It calls for goodness. It calls for faith in God and man. It calls for certain ethical values, certain sense of grace and certain personal discipline.

Management by implications can be new only to this extent. The results both in terms of the present and the future will be satisfying. These results arise out of a conscious and systematic awareness of the implications of one's action and behaviour.

This is a concept as much applicable to every citizen as it is to an administrator. This too should be underscored. The reason why the administrator has been singled out is that his actions have a wider impact, a deeper significance. If he should decide to manage by implications, it will be seen how a small section of the population can bring about so much good in a short time. Indeed, MANAGEMENT is the key factor in achieving our objectives and assuring our good future.